

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 CAB-02 COME-00 DOTE-00 FAA-00 ACDA-07 SAJ-01

SAM-01 IO-13 /090 W

----- 079061

R 231339Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8309

INFO USMISSION USBERLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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FOR EB/AO/AN AND EUR/CE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, PFOR, GW, WB, US, UK, FR

SUBJECT: CIVAIR: IGS FARE INCREASE

REF: A. USBERLIN 813 B. BONN 6420 C. BONN 6026

1. SUMMARY: NEGATIVE PUBLICITY ON IGS FARE INCREASE APPEARS TO US AS INEVITABLE BY-PRODUCT OF THE BCATAG CONSULTATION PROCESS. WE, AND MORE PARTICULARLY BRITISH AND FRENCH, ARE, HOWEVER, SOMEWHAT CONCERNED BY DIRECT PRESS REFERENCE TO AIRLINE FINANCIAL DATA. OUR MOST RECENT SOUNDINGS WITH FONOFF (JIRKA AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY LAUTENSCHLAGER) INDICATE FRG MAKING GENUINE EFFORT TO SPEED MATTERS ALONG BUT MAY 1 IMPLEMENTATION DATE NOW APPEARS HIGHLY UNLIKELY. FINAL GERMAN
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POSITION IN BCATAG IS AS YET UNCLEAR. END SUMMARY.

2. WE ALSO VIEW SPATE OF NEGATIVE PRESS REACTION TO FARE INCREASE ANNOUNCEMENT AS AN INEVITABLE OUTGROWTH OF THE ALLIED/FRG CONSULTATION PROCESS. COVERAGE IN THE FRG'S PRESTIGIOUS SUDDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG AND FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE HAS THUS FAR BEEN REASONABLY STRAIGHTFORWARD, FOCUSING ON A SPD BUNDESTAG DEPUTY'S SUGGESTION THAT TRANSPORT MINISTER GSCHIEDLE USE HIS INFLUENCE TO OBTAIN AN EQUAL VOICE IN IGS FARE MATTERS. BOTH PAPERS REFERRED TO A SUGGESTION BY A CDU SPOKESMAN IN THE BERLIN LANDTAG THAT SERIOUS CONSIDERATION BE GIVEN TO INCREASED SUBSIDIES, AT LEAST FOR THE SHORTER ROUTES.

3. A DIRECT REFERENCE TO AIRLINE FINANCIAL DATA (ALBEIT INACCURATE) CAUSED SOME CONCERN HERE AMONG THE ALLIES SINCE IT COULD DISCOURAGE THE AIRLINES FROM CONTINUING TO BE AS FORTHCOMING WITH INFORMATION AS THEY HAVE IN THE PAST. AFTER CONSULTATION WITH THE BRITISH AND FRENCH (THE MOST INDIGNANT OVER THE APPARENT VIOLATION OF CONFIDENCE IMPLIED IN THE LEAKING OF AIRLINE FINANCIAL DATA) WE APPROACHED FONOFF BCATAG REP JIRKA AGAIN, EMPHASIZING OUR CONCERNS REGARDING THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING OUR CREDIBILITY WITH THE AIRLINES, AND THE URGENT REQUIREMENT FOR PROMPT INTRODUCTION OF THE HIGHER FARES.

4. JIRKA EXPRESSED CONSIDERABLE REGRET OVER THE TONE AND CONTENT OF THE PRESS COVERAGE AND ASSURED US THAT IT WAS UNLIKELY ANY DETAILED MATERIAL HAD LEAKED TO THE PRESS FROM FRG SOURCES. HE ALSO EXPRESSED SYMPATHY WITH OUR DESIRE FOR A RAPID IMPLEMENTATION, RECOGNIZING THAT THE LONGER THE DELAY, THE LONGER IT WOULD TAKE FOR THE NEGATIVE PUBLICITY TO DIE DOWN. THE GERMAN SIDE WAS, HE SAID, MOVING AS RAPIDLY AS POSSIBLE. GIVEN HIS AND THE TRANSPORT MINISTRY'S HEAVY NEGOTIATING PROGRAM THIS MONTH (INCLUDING CONSULTATIONS WITH THE U.S. APRIL 26-28), HOWEVER, HE COULD NOT SCHEDULE A SECOND INTER-

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MINISTERIAL MEETING UNTIL APRIL 29. HE WOULD THEN PLAN TO REVIEW THE SITUATION AGAIN WITH THE CAA'S ON APRIL 30, IN PREPARATION FOR A FULL BCATAG MEETING IN THE WEEK BEGINNING MAY 3. JIRKA CONCLUDED BY ASSURING US THAT HIS APRIL 21 MEETING HAD REACHED NO FIRM DECISION REGARDING A POSSIBLE ATTEMPT TO INDUCE THE ALLIES TO REDUCE THE LEVEL OF FARE INCREASE. HE ACKNOWLEDGED, HOWEVER, THAT SOME PARTICIPANTS FOUND THE INCREASE A BIT STEEP AND AVOIDED COMMITTING HIMSELF AS TO THE FINAL POSITION GERMAN BCATAG REPS WOULD ADOPT.

5. WE TOLD JIRKA WE APPRECIATE THAT THE GERMANS HAD TO EXAMINE OUR PRESENTATION AS FULLY AS POSSIBLE; HOWEVER, WE HAD HOPED THAT TWO WEEKS WOULD HAVE BEEN SUFFICIENT FOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THIS PURPOSE. ECON/COMMERCIAL MIN COUNSELOR MADE A PARALLEL PRESENTATION TO FONOFF ASSISTANT SECRETARY LAUTENSCHLAGER APRIL 22 DURING A PREVIOUSLY SCHEDULED DISCUSSION OF OTHER MATTERS. LAUTENSCHLAGER ALSO ASSURED US THAT FONOFF WAS DOING ITS LEVEL BEST TO ACCELERATE CONSIDERATION OF THE FARES CASE, BUT THAT IT WOULD BE UNREALISTIC TO AIM FOR A MAY 1 IMPLEMENTATION. WE URGED ONCE AGAIN THAT EVERY EFFORT BE MADE TO PROVIDE FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF THE NEW FARES AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

6. COMMENT: WE RECOGNIZE PLANNING DIFFICULTIES CREATED
FOR THE AIRLINES BY A POSTPONEMENT OF THE INCREASE
BEYOND MAY 1, BUT REALISTICALLY THERE WOULD SEEM TO BE
LITTLE ALTERNATIVE. WE WILL OF COURSE CONTINUE TO URGE
OUR GERMAN CONTACTS HERE TO MOVE AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.
HILLENBRAND

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